new masses

JULY 9, 1946
Vol. LX, No. 2 • 15c; in Canada 20c

THREE POEMS BY ILYA EHRENBURG

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: *Anniversary, by Howard Fast; Marxism and Democracy's Tradition, by A. Landy; The Investigators, by Lewis Allan; Letters to Congress—From Franco, by Virginia Gardner.*

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just a minute

"ENCLOSED please find $1," writes an ex-GI from Berkeley, California, "as a contribution to NEW MASSES. I am sorry that it can't be more, but as a veteran trying to go to school under the 'G.I. Bill,' I don't have much cash to spare . . . especially since the monopolists are getting the price raises that they are. It seems to me that the best way for me to help keep a free press for the people—even if I do have to eat beans for a couple of days—is to help support the press that *is* free—such as the fine NEW MASSES."

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ANNIVERSARY

"Those of high estate hereabout are bitterly opposed to our actions," wrote Ephriam Bank. How the partisans of '75 became a revolutionary army.

By HOWARD FAST

Sketch for a mural, by Anton Refregier.

THAT revolution, which is so generally spelled now with an upper-case R, was a very real and bitter thing to those people who participated in it. They cocked their eyes up from down below, in contrast to the many generations of well-fed historians who, playing the part of lackeys so willingly, looked back grandly on an epic of heroes and turned it into a Chamber of Commerce period-piece.

It was quite different for the common people who shook the earth in the last three decades of the eighteenth century. Ephriam Bank, a farmer who lived near the little New England village of Concord, had a different impression of events. He was a fairly literate man, though he had no formal schooling; he kept random notes in that year before the Declaration of Independence was signed, and parts make interesting reading. The early parts, for example, when he joined a revolutionary people's circle, and came once a week for musket practice and once a week for discussion. He records at that time, in March of '75:

"There is much hot feeling against the red Indian, the Most of it from Jesse Clew who journed westward and suffred greviously from their annoyances, losing a small child and his home. Brother Freyberg lectured on the Responsibility of the British for these Cruelties, a way of sowing division and discord, the better to rule. Know thine enemies, was the Text of the sermon he preached."

A week later, Bank, who had worked all his life to maintain his farm of fourteen acres, notes:

"Those of high estate hereabout are bitterly opposed to Our actions. It would seem that possession of a set of silver and a servant or two makes one a handmaiden of the wretched British more than Birth in the old country. Isaiah Abbot read a com-

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munication from kin in the old Land, and they too are in wretched state even more so than we. Brother Freyberg preached that if brother be set against brother, the rich against the poor, then surely the poor shall triumph, for are they not the Children of God? Have they not taken up their arms in God's cause? How shall God favor those who make of their alters a Mockery, a place of graven images?"

That seems to have been shortly before the battle at Concord Bridge, in which Bank participated. If you remember, that was not an engagement by any unit of a regular army, but an action in which a group of partisan farmers drove back the British troops and saved the store of illicit arms they had accumulated. Bank described it:

"A most confused affray, in which many new to the bitter taste of battle shot off their guns in each direction. Fear was not apparent in our ranks, and my heart swelled with pride and the more so when I spied youthful Connister, a bullet in his arm and yet manfully holding away the tears. We did better on the retreat of the Lobsters, cursed be they who hold a free people in Contempt, and behind walls our few riflemen made Slaughter with Them. But we are prone to favor the quick, bury the Dead, and make merry over our Triumph. I much fear, however, that this is a Long and Painful War upon which we embark . . . and who will pursu it but the Folk. . . . There is no Power and no Government on our Side, but the right arm of a Just God. . . ."

In a vague way—for his notes were neither complete nor particularly conscious of an interested posterity—we can follow the movements of Farmer Bank in that year before there was a Declaration of Independence, before there was a regular army, a union of colonies, a department of supply or finance or anything of the sort, but only an aroused population of common folk who had heard that the blood of free men had been shed on American soil, and had decided to take a hand.

It was a mobilization of partisan bands under local Committees of Action. Note the word *partisan;* it seems to have come into being, in its modern sense, in our first war for liberation. I know of no use of it previous to that time, at least in the same sense—and if the word was favored in the Carolinas and in Georgia, it was most certainly also used in the northern colonies.

But even though this was a movement of the people, spontaneous and immediate, it was not without prelude and preparation. The Committees of Action had been knit in some cases for months, in some for years, by a regular system of secret correspondence. The question of unity—among the partisan bands, not among the provincial assemblies—had already been decided, and it was agreed by the people's committees that an explosion anywhere would be the signal for a popular uprising, regardless of what the legislators decided. In New Hampshire and in Vermont, where the wonderfully effective and deadly long rifle was widely used, companies of riflemen had been formed, and a few such companies had come down to the Boston area to aid the people in this hotbed of trouble. Those were probably the rifles of which Farmer Bank wrote.

The postscript to Concord Bridge and the temporary victory won there was precisely what had been planned by these Committees of Action— general uprising. Not only in Concord but in a hundred other villages, scattered through New England and down through Jersey and New York into Pennsylvania, the partisan bands formed, took packages of bread and meat, flasks of water, their guns and shot, and trudged toward Boston. The people were in action, on the move, by twos, threes, tens and hundreds marching along the rutted dirt roads that led toward Boston. Command was local; they elected officers; they were their own commissaries. At this point, Ephriam Bank wrote:

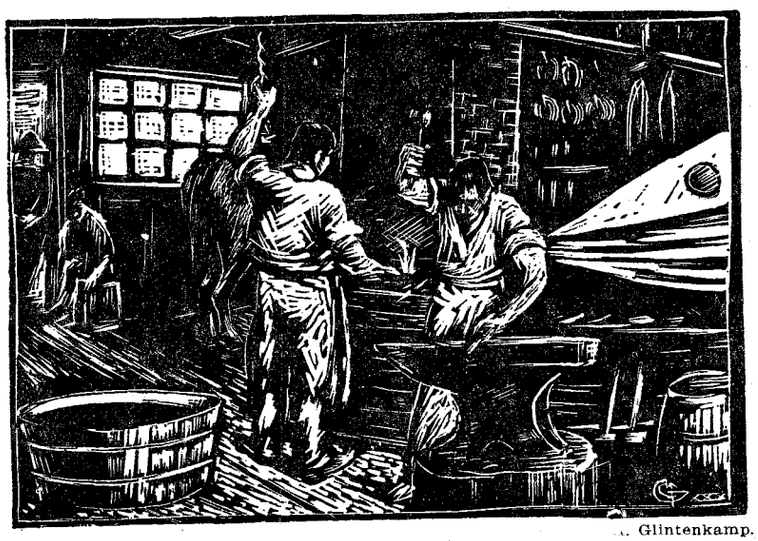
"I kissed goodby and blessed be to my Good Wife and four little ones, God help them, and then went with the company in the Direction of Boston Town . . . The roads are crowded with men bearing arms and no good will or Token for the Oppressor . . . Our company is calm and marches brisk, muskets and the blunderbuss and plenty of shot."

An army was forming outside of Boston, and Farmer Bank became part of it. He lay behind the parapet on Breed's Hill when the British were repulsed in their first great defeat, and he records:

"Brother Freyberg is slain, God have Mercy on his Soul, and I begin to see what a price liberty asks—for I have neither word or line from my wife and Dear Ones. There is a sickness in the camp and outside the city five hundred fresh graves. . . There is no use begging the future, for we are marked as traitors, and a hempen rope is all the glory we will get for going home."

His writing, which was full and verbose at first, becomes closer and tighter as the partisan army becomes a permanent revolutionary force. Only a line or two records his march to New York City, which the new commander-in-chief, George Washington, had decided to defend. The July ninth entry in his little diary is almost the last; soon he disappears from life and history, only a half-known figure in the heartbreaking yet triumphant march of men of good will. On the ninth of July, he wrote:

"I like not these New York people, for they are creven and servil to the king and filled with a lust for their property. Too much owning is a curse in a man's blood . . . . Yet it may be that there will come hope and new United strengt from this Declarasion signed in Philadelfia. The folk must learn to hold together, for they have only God and themselfs."



.. Glintenkamp.

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MARXISM AND DEMOCRACY'S TRADITION

The contradiction between the rights of property and the rights of man, inherent in the origin of democracy, is resolved by socialism.

By A. LANDY

THE modern democratic tradition was born in revolution and developed in the class struggle of the masses to realize the democratic promise of the revolution against feudalism. It has been preeminently a people's tradition, associated with the activity, the welfare and the flourishing of "the common man." Militant in character, republican in principle and international in outlook, it is, above all, a tradition of progress and freedom, of work and happiness for everyone. Its intellectual qualities are distinguished by the spirit of enlightenment, the affirmation of reason, and an organic aversion to ignorance and prejudice. Its development has been interwoven with the growth of modern science and has been animated by the temper of humanism with its concern for the rights, dignity and elevation of every individual—all essential elements of a social climate indispensable to a free and rapid development of the productive and creative capacities of society.

What is the relation of Marxism to this tradition?

Modern democracy had its genesis in the struggle for the abolition of feudal property relations and the establishment of freedom for bourgeois property. This historical origin endowed the democratic tradition with a two-fold character which shaped the main features of its subsequent development.

1. The bourgeoisie wanted political power for the purpose of protecting and promoting its economic interests; it strove to introduce democratic improvements not to abolish privilege but to replace feudal privilege by the privilege of wealth. It sought from the outset to restrict the scope and range of these democratic rights by restricting liberty to political liberty and equality to formal equality before the law. By establishing property qualifications for the right of electing and being elected, it intended to retain the suffrage for its own class. By limiting equality to a mere equality before the law, based upon the inequality of rich and poor, its object was to preserve it as a purely bourgeois privilege. Consequently, the democratic current, which arose with the ascendance of the bourgeoisie, was bound, in the course of its development, to reveal an unmistakable divergence between its formal premises and its actual historical substance. The bourgeois reality of limited liberty and equality could not assert itself without constantly breaking through the formal premises of unlimited freedom, thereby exposing them as largely an appearance in sharp contrast to the real substance. The appearance, in turn, representing the aspirations of the people, was bound constantly to "embarrass" and "plague" the reality, finding over and over again that it could come into its own only by itself becoming the historical reality.

The chief premise of the democratic conception, as established in the historical declarations of the American and French Revolutions, is that all power derives from the people. The struggle against feudal privileges and the feudal state, based on the divine right of kings, was waged in the name of the sovereignty of the people. Appearing as early as the fifteenth century in France, the conception of the equal participation of all people in the conduct of the nation's affairs was further encouraged by the Dutch and British Revolutions of the seventeenth century, and was given its clearest theoretical expression by Rousseau in the eighteenth century. It was the fundamental argument of the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man.

True, the bourgeoisie in the American and French Revolutions restricted the concept of "the people" to the property owners. But the very nature of bourgeois society, based on cities, and the historic need of involving the urban masses in the struggle to overthrow feudalism, could not long maintain this restriction. The history of the democratic struggle, from the middle of the seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century, is replete with efforts of the people to realize the full and literal meaning of the concept of the sovereignty of the people, first of all by abolishing qualifications and restrictions on suffrage and the holding of office and by securing a bill of rights which would implement this concept. In the United States during this time this effort was expressed in two chief periods of collaboration of the urban masses, artisans and petty bourgeoisie with the small farmers: first during the period of Jeffersonian democracy, and then during the period of Jacksonian democracy, when the emergent labor movement, based on the new factory system, united with the small farmers and other democratic forces of the cities.

THE idea of the sovereignty of the people was grounded in the concept of natural rights. This concept first served the rising bourgeoisie while it was still developing within the framework of the feudal system. Belief in a Law of Nature or Law of Reason had been an element prominent in medieval thought since the time of Thomas Aquinas; it fed the idea of Natural Rights by which the gentry and the middle-class corporations defended their interests against the unlimited and irresponsible power of despotic kings. In the seventeenth century John Locke transformed the theory of Natural Rights into a philosophic justification of the British Whig Revolution of 1688; and through Locke it passed into British classical political economy. Through Locke also, and to a lesser extent through Montesquieu, it became the philosophy of the eighteenth century revolutions and of the leading rationalist thinkers of the Enlightenment throughout Europe. Thus the so-called natural, inalienable rights of man were in their historical origin no more than the rights of a member of bourgeois society.

2. As a result of this two-fold char-

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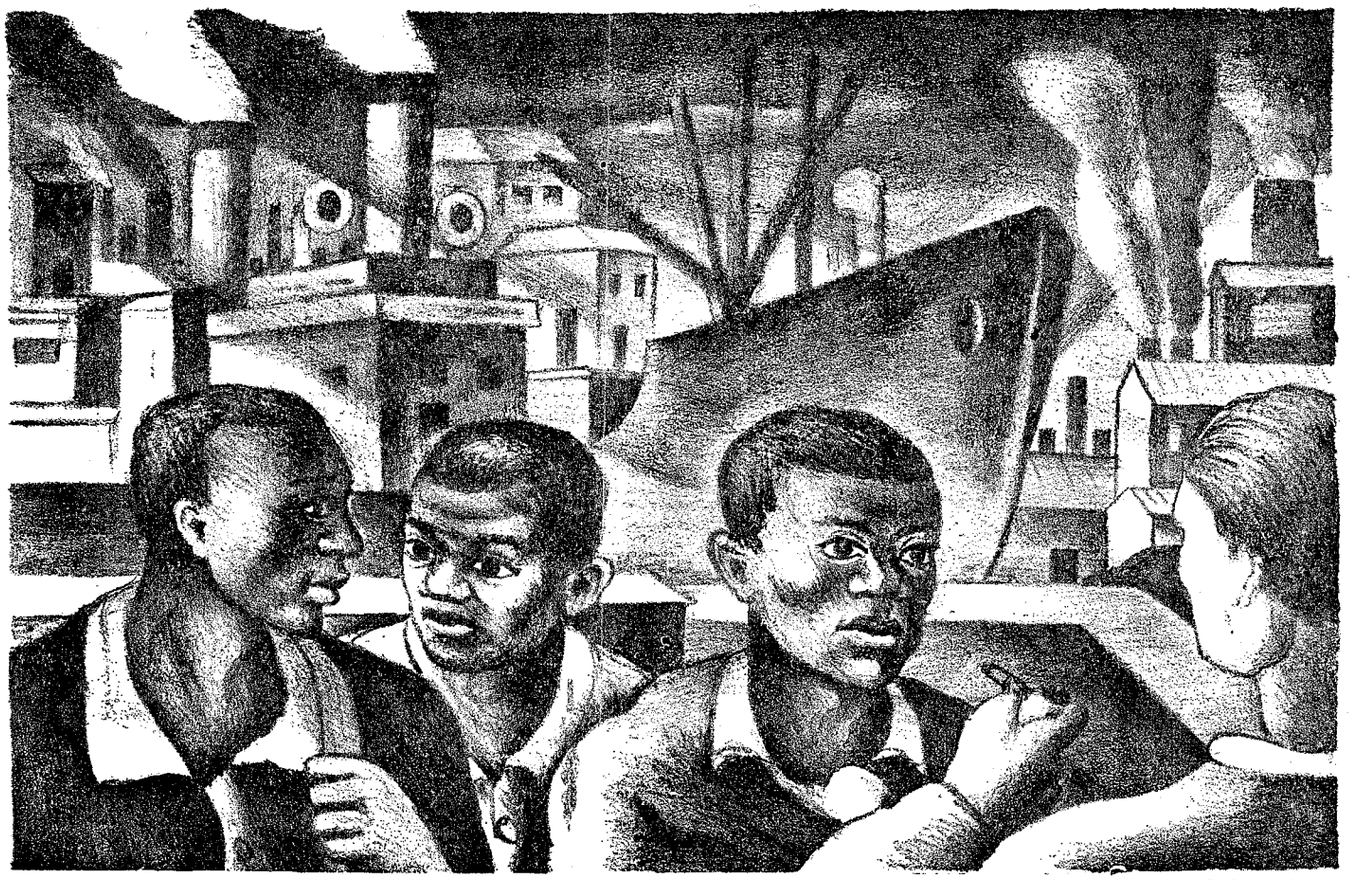

J. L. Wells.

acter of the democratic current, part of the bourgeoisie preferred a constitutional monarchy to the hazards of a republic with its democratic promise and opportunities. Indeed, the first efforts at establishing a republic in the seventeenth century ended in monarchic restoration. The British bourgeoisie, for instance, struggling to emerge from the local and provincial limitations which circumscribed it at that time, dreaded the despotism of pure monarchy and was no less hostile to pure aristocracy; but since it regarded democracy as more terrifying than either, it chose the constitutional monarchy as the best means for its rule. The financial aristocracy of France did the same thing in the revolution of July 1830, establishing a bourgeois monarchy despite the fact that the republicans and workers fought and won the revolution with the object of establishing a democratic republic. To maintain the pretense, Louis Philippe, the bourgeois king, spoke glibly of his republican institutions. Even Prussia, in 1830, presented itself as a monarchy surrounded by republican institutions. And in Italy, at this time, the bourgeois Party of Moderates likewise tipped their hats to the republic, but preferred the surer safety of the monarchy, a tendency which became all the more marked after 1830 with the emergence of the modern proletariat as the leading democratic force. This was repeated in Germany in 1848 when the king sacrificed the nobility to the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie sacrificed the people to the king; the monarch, as Marx aptly remarked, becoming bourgeois and the bourgeoisie becoming monarchist. It was historic irony that Metternich, arch-symbol of feudal restoration and reaction in the first half of the nineteenth century, should have been the one to put his finger on this contradiction embodied in the bourgeois fear of democracy.

3. In the light of this relationship of the bourgeoisie to democracy, it is understandable why the working people were the most consistent "pure democrats," as they were called after 1830 in Europe. It was the people, not the bourgeois property owners, who were the most ardent champions of the republic, who believed in democracy and strove for its realization.

"For the past six hundred years," Engels said, "every progressive movement had its origin in the cities, so much so that the independent democratic movements of the farm population (Wat Tyler, Jack Cade, the Jacquerie, the Peasant War) not only made a reactionary appearance but also were suppressed. The industrial proletariat of the cities has become the kernel of all modern democracy; the petty bourgeois, and more so the peasants, depend entirely upon its initiative. The French Revolution of 1789 and the most recent history of England, France and the Eastern states of America demonstrate this."

DEMOCRACY meant political rights for the people, and the people, in turn, were anxious to secure these rights and to give them substance through the fulfillment of their economic demands and social aspirations. They therefore strove to enlarge the concept of democracy to include social, as well as political rights.

4. The democratic current was thus characterized historically by an inner contradiction already implicit in the struggle between bourgeois and feudal

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property. This contradiction was constantly threatening to emerge and become the central issue, and actually did emerge in the great democratic revolutions of Europe and America. It was a contradiction created by bourgeois property itself—the contradiction embodied in the social question. It expressed itself in the rise of movements, within these revolutions, for the abolition of all inequality, not only political inequality, through the abolition of private property. These were movements of people who saw in private property the source of the exploitation of the many by the few and of the political domination of the wealthy minority in possession of economic power and, consequently, of effective political power.

They were communist movements that arose historically within the stream of modern democracy. It was for this reason that Karl Marx declared, "Socialism and communism did not originate in Germany, but in England, France and North America. The first appearance of a really active Communist Party may be placed within the period of the middle-class revolution, the moment when constitutional monarchy was abolished. The most consistent republicans—in England the Levellers, in France Babeuf, Buonarotti, etc.—were the first to proclaim these 'social questions.' The *Conspiracy of Babeuf*, written by his friend and comrade Buonarotti, shows how these republicans derived their social insight from the 'historical movement.' It also demonstrates that when the social question of princedom versus republic is removed, not a single social question of the kind that interests the proletariat has been solved."

Scientific communism, or Marxism, represented the historical continuation of this development. It arose in the course of the struggle for democracy in the 1840's. Like its predecessors, it originated within the bourgeois democratic movement in response to the social problems which this movement had no interest in solving. Arising on the basis of the most advanced thought of Western Europe and America, Marxism was the historical continuation of the democratic efforts represented by the seventeenth and eighteenth century revolutions, the struggle of the Levellers within the British Revolution of 1648 and of the Babeuvists in the French Revolution of 1789. It was the continuation, on a more advanced level, of the humanitarian efforts of the great utopian Socialists and Communists after 1815 during the unfolding of the Industrial Revolution, and of the stream of scientific knowledge embodied in French eighteenth century materialism, British political economy and German classical philosophy. It was the historical continuation of the democratic struggle of the proletarian Communist movements of England, France and America after 1830. From the day of its birth as a scientific viewpoint of social development and as a practical party, Marxism therefore inscribed democracy on its banner and allied itself with the democratic movements of Europe and the United States.

5. Thus the democratic tradition associated with the rise and growth of modern democracy is identified exclusively with the progressive tendencies, material, social and intellectual, in the historical process of which it is a part. The ascendant bourgeoisie made a series of major contributions to the origin and development of democracy. The growth of commerce and towns, the Renaissance and the Reformation, the eighteenth century Enlightenment and the subsequent American and French Revolutions are the eternal monuments of these contributions. This ascendant bourgeoisie created the conditions for the growth of science, the rule of reason and respect for the worth of the individual; but it subordinated all these to the needs of its material enrichment and the accumulation of capital. Thereby it impressed a bourgeois stamp upon them with all its limitations and restrictions. This was illustrated most strikingly by the central concept of the Rights of Man elaborated by the philosophers and inscribed on the banner of the great eighteenth century revolutions. Behind the stirring concept was the prosaic reality of bourgeois individualism based upon private interest and free competition. The man whose rights they proclaimed was the egoistic man of bourgeois self-interest. The rights which they assigned to him were rights which, as Marx said, left "every man to find in other men not the realization but rather the limits of his freedom."

E. Jaediker.

THE growth of the factory system in the nineteenth century provided democracy with a new economic foundation and linked its further development with the ascendance of the new industrial working class and labor movement. After 1830, democracy in Europe became preeminently a proletarian principle, the principle of the masses, since it was the European working class which emerged at that time as the main force in the struggle for democracy. In the principal countries of Europe, the bourgeoisie was demonstrating its unwillingness and inability to wage a consistent fight for democracy, despite the fact that the democratic republic provided the most logical form for its economic and political domination. With the emergence of this new type of working class, the industrial proletariat, striving to organize itself and conscious of its own class interests and aims, the bourgeoisie found consistent adherence to democracy too dangerous for the continuation of its economic and political rule. The working-class movement deepened and enriched the democratic tradition which had attained such a high degree of development in the eighteenth century Enlightenment.

The eighteenth century philosophers and men of letters had made respect for the human being and the dignity of man a fundamental concept of modern civilization; and they allowed neither geographical boundaries nor racial distinctions to limit or restrict this concept. They were humanitarians and their humanitarianism was as universal as mankind. As firm believers in the unity of the human race, they displayed the same interest towards all peoples and lands and opposed the domination of one people by another. "If I knew something useful to my nation but ruinous to another," Montesquieu declared, "I would not propose it to my prince because I am a human being before I am a Frenchman, be-

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cause I am by necessity a human being, whereas I am a Frenchman only by chance." And again: "If I knew something useful to my fatherland which were prejudicial to Europe or something which were useful to Europe and prejudicial to mankind, I would consider it a crime." Diderot wanted to spread the Enlightenment to all humanity and combatted those who sought to plunge the world into barbarism and darkness in order to dominate it more securely. Herder, proclaiming the fact that the old feudal order had outlived itself, summoned his fellow beings to direct their lives according to the spirit of humanity.

The eighteenth century thinkers grounded their humanism and universalism in the idea of the universal validity of truth and justice and the universal operation of reason in "all known nations." They were convinced that the law of the land which failed to conform to reason, even when sanctioned by the majority of the nation, could become the worst tyranny. But the men who provided the philosophical justification of the inalienable rights of the individual, and extended those rights to all mankind, nevertheless were limited by the historical realities out of which their thought arose. These were the realities of a bourgeois society just emerging out of the feudal world, the society to which "the bourgeoisie" was a synonym for "the people."

The working-class movement, of which Marxism was the most advanced expression, freed the humanism and universalism of the Enlightenment from its bourgeois limitations. It provided it with new social content. In place of the competitive, antagonistic individualism which separated man from man and based the realization of the rights of one individual on the denial of the rights of many individuals, it introduced a new principle of human fellowship based upon the common bond of cooperative labor, a principle corresponding not to the private ownership but to the social character of bourgeois production. The working-class movement also proclaimed the Rights of Man, but the right of every man to find in other men the realization of his freedom, not the obstacle to it.

Thus, the contradiction that appears to exist between Marxism and the democratic tradition is actually the contradiction historically inherent in the democratic current itself.

This article is an extract from a forthcoming book, "Marxism and the Democratic Tradition," to be issued by International Publishers. Mr. Landy is a leading American Marxist scholar.

LISTEN TO THE RUMBLE

No. 10 Dispossessed Street: From the Diary of an Occupant.

San Antonio

LONG rows of gray cabins set like old hens condemned to nests of infertile eggs. Split-shingled wing-walls droop with weariness.

This was once a tourist camp. The sign is faded, almost obliterated, and now this is a plot of earth dedicated to the homeless, a block of leaky roofs to shelter the dispossessed. This is a battleground of human emotions, a community cosmopolitan, pregnant with ideas.

Let the steam from the pot on the gas plate stifle your thoughts. The closet kitchenette was not built to think in. Drop another coin into the cracked sugar bowl. The baby in No. 6 is dying of diarrhea. Its daddy is a joblesss veteran. He fought for the Four Freedoms!

We of the sanctuary of the dispossessed didn't bury our children in the Potters' Field, for a good reason. The fathers of a city ravaged by polio and politics discovered to their amazement graves only fourteen inches deep and dogs gnawing human bones in Potters' Field.

One undertaker said to another, "Hell, they oughta knowed it, we been burying paupers thataway for thirty years. Three dollars won't dig a grave no deeper."

Turn off the gas and mop the sweat from your brow. It's time for supper. Set the card table by the bed and pull up the two chairs. "Damn the roaches. They stay sleek and fat without working and DDT won't keep 'em out of the table."

Forget the supper and help get kids onto the doorsteps and against the cabins. The ambulance is coming for the woman in 22. She went off the beam and took to roaming the camp at night and the cabins were monsters with fiery eyes crouching for the kill. Her shrieks and groans kept us awake. Lulled by a sedative, she lies in her bed, moaning. Her husband sits on the doorsteps sobbing and praying. "Christ! We wish the ambulance would hurry."

Granny resides at No. 3, exists on a pension and lives in her dreams. All day she moves her treasured raw-hide-bottomed chair to accommodate herself to the shadow of her cabin. She rouses from her dreams occasionally to watch the kids play hide-and-seek among the houses, scratching the impetigo on their faces with grimy fingers. Granny lifts her parchment hands and protests weakly. "We hadn't oughta raise chillern thisaway."

Put the kids to bed and stop up every hole big enough for a rat to enter. Last week we sought donors of blood for the baby in 69. The rats gnawed a hole in its little back as it lay in its cradle. When rats attack a child, that is not news! Once we circulated a petition to get the city to exterminate the rats but the city fathers ruled that it would be infringing on the rights of the exterminating companies, "interfering with free enterprise!"

A deathly silence hangs over the camp tonight. We miss the screams of the woman in 22. If it were only Saturday night, the man in 50 would be drunk and raising cain.

We try to sleep but the rats are gnawing in the walls and we hear Granny's quavering voice, "We hadn't oughta raise chillern thisaway." LEONORA SWEETLAND.

NEW MASSES *invites its readers to contribute to its "Listen to the Rumble" with accounts of what they see and hear on the many significant problems facing the nation today.*

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An Editorial by JOSEPH NORTH

A BELL is tolling and, as the poet warned, it tolls for thee: yet it can as well be an alarm summoning men to act instead of a call to mourn. The occasion is our homeland's liberty.

Attorney General Tom C. Clark is not a member of the Rankin committee but evidence accumulates daily that he may as well be. His thinking reveals itself as synonymous with that of the Goebbels-minded men whose business is division, suspicion, hatred. No true American will deny that about the Rankin committee, but what is lost to most is this: the policy of that neanderthal committee is becoming administration policy.

Consider this fortnight's happenings alone: the Un-American committee presented its annual report, which reads like a document translated from the German dug up from the Berlin ruins of Gestapo headquarters. It is a farrago of fantastic lies, irrelevancies and obfuscations, from which one clear fact emerges: its purpose is to describe progressives and liberals of any shade as agents of a foreign government (you may surmise which). And its purpose, too, is to condone, or rather to stimulate, the fascist within our country. After pages of wild-eyed allegations, you get to the wormy core: defense of fascism in America. The "proper agency" of the government—The Justice Department—is reviled because it "found time to prosecute some thirty or forty native Americans who were charged with sedition, and a trial covering eight months and costing hundreds of thousands of dollars was conducted to convict these persons." The report gloats over the fact that the Department "now admits that they have no concrete evidence against these so-called native fascists" (*sic*). Joe McWilliams must be chuckling as he fondles his blackjack for the next explosion of riotings. And every sinister band in the nation takes heart. The marriage of the Taft Republican and Rankin Democrat is being consummated.

But it is a sign of the times that the government, which once (how long ago it seems) sought to prosecute fascists, today permits—nay, fosters—the emergence of racism, labor hatred: in brief, fascism. And hence it has come to pass that we are perilously near Government by Rankin Committee.

The Attorney General is an important man. Within his hands lie certain guarantees of democratic rights. That is supposed to be his job. But listen to our present Attorney General. Intelligent enough to realize he cannot, as the Rankin committee does, condone the ambitions of native fascism, he lumps Communists and fascists together, and arrives at this conclusion, expressed at a meeting of the Chicago Bar Association: "We know that in the black bible of their [Communists and fascists] faith they seek to capture the important offices in the labor unions, to create strikes and dissensions, and to raise barriers to the efforts of lawful authorities to maintain civil peace." Nor does he halt at calling for extra-legal violence when he says further that "the radicals" are "driving good Americans to the end of their patience." His calculated combination of "Communist" with "fascist" is a gadget to confuse all fair-minded Americans, to cozen the common man's agreement with his purposes, his and that of the administration.

Yet he is a canny man. He realizes 1946 is not 1919. He cannot produce a precise duplicate of the program of his predecessor, A. Mitchell Palmer, whose name has gone down in history as gauleiter of the Red raids which produced a revulsion throughout America, and in today's context, would evoke even a greater furore of protest.

So Mr. Clark doped things out differently. Reliable Washington sources warn that he has given the green light to the Department of Justice for a campaign of every kind of harassment against the Communist Party, the trade unions and anybody who strives for American-Soviet friendship. Blacklists of all progressives are being compiled while a public campaign of hatred is being prepared: and at the close of it, when the Attorney General feels secure enough, he will signal for the second act—wholesale raids. An epoch of modern history that led to the Nuremberg trials began the same way.

Mr. Clark has some other cards up his long sleeve. He has discovered a distinction between "private" violence and "public" violence. In his address to the Chicago lawyers he indicated that his department has little jurisdiction to act when "private" individuals take the law in their own hands (as Bilbo is demanding against Negroes who plan to vote), or when the Ku Klux Klan beats men to death because their skin is darker than Mr. Clark's. And more, the Attorney General's associates in the FBI and the Department of Justice have found that Communists were most culpable in

This Week's Rankest

"Here it is, Duke—this is the post I told you about."

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the Columbia, Tenn. tragedy! Moscow agents, a Communist plot, was behind the bloody business.

It is not hard to discern the pattern of Mr. Clark's strategy. It is this: pretend the Communist is synonymous with the fascist, drive against the former; and as the campaign picks up momentum and an appropriate political climate is induced, drive against everybody, every man and woman whose ideas hold with labor, with good relations with Soviet Russia, and who is, in brief, a peace-loving, democratic American. And hence is, by today's definition, an opponent of administration policy. Unless this is recognized and combatted, the dynamic toward fascism here will move on unimpeded.

Our liberals, all too often blind to history's experiences—even the modern history of Germany since 1933—are catching a glimpse of reality but only a glimpse. Proof of this can be found in the New York *Post* of June 27, when Charles Van Devander and William O. Player, Jr., tell the alarming, yet typical, story of the Senators who promised to help Assistant Secretary of State Russell secure appropriations "if he would 'purge' the department of 'Reds' and 'fellow travelers.'" Various congressmen forwarded Russell their own lists of departmental employes whom they "considered Reds or at least dangerous radicals, and who therefore should be fired." The list, the reporters write, is "absolutely laughable" (some fun) inasmuch as they contain the names not only of "liberals . . . but also of a number of rock-ribbed conservatives and even downright reactionaries." And Senator Russell, of Georgia, dissatisfied with the legal provision that those discharged can seek redress before the Civil Service Commission, has introduced a rider to the departmental appropriations bill conferring "absolutely unlimited" power of dismissal upon Secretary Byrnes. "Thus," the writers say, "the entire personnel of the department would be left subject to discharge at the whim of Russell and his witch-hunters, without proof of disloyalty or anything else." It is a measure of the time that the Senate quietly accepted the rider.

So the pattern of the swastika is shaped across the land: use every means—the press, the radio, legal and governmental services—to build "a case" against Communists; then proceed down the line and destroy all opposition, all difference, with the war-bent administration policy.

This is the essence of the unabated spate of propaganda in the press, the articles by Max Eastman in the Scripps-Howard chain, the *hoch-politik* of John Foster Dulles in *Life*, and the violence of Cardinal Spellman in the *American Magazine*.

And unless the uttermost unity is achieved to combat this drive, unless the liberals and people generally eschew Red-baiting, a bell is indeed tolling. And it tolls for thee—for as Hitler proved, none can escape. Except the fascists.

THE INVESTIGATORS

By LEWIS ALLAN

(The star chamber of an investigation committee room decorated with taxpayers' money. The investigating werewolves have found a victim.)

THE INVESTIGATORS

We are the investigators
By position
Members of the inquisition
Red baiters
Labor haters
Future traitors

At present small potaters
But hoping some day
In our own way
To become—shall we say—
Dictators

Take Mussolini
What was he?
Just a local boy who made good
With hard work and toil
And plenty of castor oil.

And Adolph
A background even quainter
What was *he?*
Just an ordinary house painter
With vision.
For our part
We've got a much better start.
We are members of a respectable committee
With a substantial kitty
Appointed
Anointed
Given the yessing and the blessing
Of the best people

Chamber of Commerce
Manufacturers' Association

We're investigators in fields educational
Very sensational.

We expose
What nobody knows
Except ourselves
(Clever little elves)

We expose
Subversion in the throes
How it grows
Where it shows
Each tentacle
Identical
To the minutest curve
Observe

You can tell a Red
By the bumps upon his head
By the way he sleeps in bed
By what vitamins he's fed
And even when he's dead
You can tell a Red.

THE VICTIM

Academic Freedom!

THE INVESTIGATORS

See!
That's what we mean
It's quite easily seen they're
Rude
Crude
Shocking
Undignified
And very tactless.

You can tell a Red
By the way he combs his hair
By his winter underwear
By a most subversive stare
By the fact he's everywhere.

THE VICTIM

Democracy in Education
Education for Democracy.

THE INVESTIGATORS

See
That's what we mean
Creating schisms
With foreign isms
Importing from across the sea
Such alien doctrines
As equality
Giving the people illusions
About democracy
The very idea!
To talk about democracy over here!
Democracy is something you fight
To save somewhere else

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G. Holson.

"And mama's little darling is going to get two lamb chops today for being good."

Why our heart positively melts
When we think of saving the world
for democracy
In some other quarter of the globe.

Saving the globe'll
Be positively noble
But democracy in the schools?
A program of fools!
Without becoming discursive
That's what we call definitely *subversive.*
(They motion towards the Victim)
Take Mr. Smith for example
The name Smith is probably a myth
Undoubtedly it is a name which
Is really Stanislavski Gregorovitch
Quite obviously a well-paid gent
Working as a foreign agent
In the Little Red School House.

THE VICTIM

The name *is* Smith
And it's not a myth
S-M-I-T-H
Smith.

THE INVESTIGATORS

We don't care how it's spelt
It's probably a transmission belt.
He's the sort
That has more than one dangerous
thought
But he'll be caught.

There's more than one way of skinning a cat
And we know what we're at.
All we need is a rat.
And they're for hire.
Remember the Reichstag Fire?

(Suddenly pouncing on The Victim)
What's your name?
What's your game?
Who's your mother?

Who's your father?
Who's your brother?
What do you eat?
What do you drink?
What do you read?
What do you think?

(Without giving him time to answer)
The man is obviously hiding something
Fortunately
We have a reliable witness
Of unimpeachable fitness
A man of virtue
Beyond compare
He gets around everywhere.
He can slide through wee holes
On his knees
He can glide through key holes
With the greatest of ease
His name you see
Is R - A - T
(The witness appears, a sniffling, shifty-eyed character)
Witness, take the stand
And you can lie to beat the band.

RAT

(Pointing to the Victim)
Oh yeah,
That's him
On February 1939
He was marchin' on the May Day line
It was exactly two minutes past four
Not a second after or before.

THE VICTIM

(Protesting)
But—

THE INVESTIGATORS

Quiet!

THE VICTIM

May I question the witness?

THE INVESTIGATORS

What! Impugn his unimpeachable fitness!

THE VICTIM

But how can May Day come in February!

THE INVESTIGATORS

That remark was quite unnecessary.
The point is he *saw* you
It makes no difference *when*
Or *where*
Whether it was *then*
Or *there*
The point is he *saw* you
And you were undoubtedly carrying *concealed thoughts!*

RAT

He certainly was
And they were very fiery
I wrote them all down
Exactly as he thought them
In my diary.

THE INVESTIGATORS

Excellent!

RAT

And then after the parade
I followed him
I had a sneaking premonition
That some day in the future
I might be of service to my country.

THE INVESTIGATORS

Such devotion
Such purity.

And then—?

RAT

And then—he went to Madison Square Garden.

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THE INVESTIGATORS

Aha!
For shame!
He was watching a—?

RAT

Basketball game.

THE INVESTIGATORS
(Distraught)

No! No!

RAT
(Stupidly)

No?

THE INVESTIGATORS

It was a *meeting*. Don't you remember?

RAT

Why of course! How could I have missed it.
I got my diaries twisted.

THE INVESTIGATORS

Thank you.
(One of the investigators slips him some folding money)
Thank *you!*

THE INVESTIGATORS

Thank you for everything.

THE VICTIM
(Protesting)

But—

THE INVESTIGATORS

Next witness!

THE VICTIM

But—

THE INVESTIGATORS

We insist. He's dismissed.

THE LAWYER
(Suddenly appearing)

Why don't you let him question the witness?

THE INVESTIGATORS
(Whispering)

That's the lawyer.
The lawyer? How odd!

THE LAWYER
(Quietly, with dignity)

Why don't you let him—

THE INVESTIGATORS

Don't shout!
Throw him out!
He's a Red!
Off with his head!
Not yet—
The stage isn't quite set.
We'll save it for some future tete-a-tete.

You see what we mean?
A complete undermining of the system.
You notice the sly complexity of their thoughts—
How they turn 'em and twist 'em
How devious they are and subtle
How they aim to scuttle
The whole framework of the status quo
By attacking the orthodoxy
Of poverty
War
And Jim Crow

Why if everybody had concealed thoughts
It would be a terrible blow
And if they thought out loud
They might even gather a crowd
And then where would our profits go?
Goodness! We'd be on the brink!
Imagine trusting our children
Or even adults
To people who think!

Quick! I'm fainting!

We have our own idea
Of the kind of teacher
Who fits in our conception of society,
Somebody very safe
And sane
With an arrested brain
Perfect propriety,
No connection with labor

Labor! So degrading!
A teacher isn't just an ordinary poor slob
Working at a job
A teacher is above earning a living

He should be all for *giving*.
No unions
No picket lines
No mass meetings
No delegations
No! No!
No Vacations.
His spirit must be cut in proportion.
A sort of intellectual abortion.

Ladies and gentlemen
May we present
Our synthetic creature
The perfect teacher!
(A straw man enters, the straw with which he is stuffed sticking out of his clothing, but most of all out of his head)
Speak!

STRAW MAN
(In a hollow but sincere voice)

No ifs or buts—
When I get enough *guts*
I'm going to start thinkin'!
(The Investigators shriek as the scene blacks out.)

"Don't look now, but isn't he wearing a union button?"

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LETTERS TO CONGRESS—FROM FRANCO

Our Washington editor exposes the channels through which the Spanish Embassy promotes fascist propaganda campaigns in the United States.

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington

PICK up a telephone, call the Spanish Embassy and ask how you can contact the Spanish Evidence Guild (SEG), and the chances are you will be told, as I was: "Oh, that's in our Cultural Section. I'll connect you." A young lady in the Cultural Section then told me the Spanish Evidence Guild had offices in Baltimore, and to write to a Miss Georgia Long at 715 North Calvert Street.

No limitations or restrictions are placed by the State Department upon the Spanish Embassy in distributing fascist propaganda through local groups. This same outfit, which distributes Embassy brochures and so-called information bulletins, also appears with delegations at the State Department supposedly representing American opinion, urging a hands-off-Franco policy. It organizes letter-writing campaigns to the United Nations, it sends wires "daily" to the State Department, according to one SEG spokesman, it inspires letters to Senators and Congressmen, and it is planning rallies in Philadelphia and Boston.

Over a period of several weeks I called the Embassy at various times seeking an interview with the ambassador. At first I was told that while I could not quote him, he did see reporters to give them background information. Later I was told that he rarely saw reporters. I then tried to see the press attache, Manuel Aznar, who I understand is an accomplished publicity artist. At first I was given an appointment with him. Then, the next day, I was told that if anyone told me I could see him, it was a mistake. I would first have to tell his secretary what I wanted to see him for. I told her. She called back, saying, "Mr. Aznar would be glad to see you if you are sure you will not question him about anything except cultural topics. Nothing political." I said that the Embassy itself classed the Spanish Evidence Guild as cultural, and the Cultural Section had given me SEG's address.

"Oh, we have an address, but I do not think it is cultural. I think you will have to ask to see Mr. Baraibar, the minister counselor," she insisted.

At the Spanish Embassy, I talked to Germain Baraibar about the Spanish Evidence Guild. "They are not distributors of our propaganda," he said. When I told him I had obtained Embassy publications from SEG, he still insisted they were not "distributors," but said they could have obtained a few copies of publications, just as anyone could. He did not know exactly how many copies of the weekly *Bulletin* were issued by the Embassy, "maybe 2,000, sometimes less, sometime more." The SEG, he said, "has nothing in common with the Embassy —they may be supporters of Franco, that's all."

There was no organized distribution of literature through Catholic churches, he said. "It depends on the priest. If they ask, we send them."

Mr. Baraibar carefully wrote down my name and the name of NEW MASSES, the address of my office, and said he would send me some literature. "I like the name of your magazine," he said as I was departing, and repeated musically, "NEW MASSES. Ah, Miss Gardner, he said, "the masses should rule all over the world."

Two women nominally run the SEG; Miss Long, who says she has been doing publicity for twenty-five years, part of which time she lived in Spain, and Mrs. Mary K. Jones, an artist, who also spent years in Spain, she said. Mrs. Jones resides at 2609 North Charles Street, Baltimore, and uses her studio, located in a massive old garage at 107 East 25th Street, Baltimore, as offices for SEG.

Mrs. Jones told me how they had "encouraged" Franco's emissary, Ambassador Cardenas, to get out publicity. "Franco doesn't approve of propaganda," she said cozily. "He wants to put all the money into the country. He's that way. And the ambassador doesn't have a flair for publicity. But we got him to begin getting out the *Bulletin* again, and now they're doing other things."

She handed me a recent issue of the

Kleinholz

"Tell it to your Congressman."

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Spanish Embassy's Information Bulletin, containing such items as a Mexican writer's praise of former Ambassador Carlton J. H. Hayes' book, *Wartime Mission in Spain*, and an article entitled, "Finds Spain Not Quite As Bad As Foes Picture It. There Are Differences, But People Like Franco." This, the *Bulletin* explained, was "from a telegram sent from Madrid on March 16, 1946, by Larry Rue, Chicago *Tribune* correspondent."

But Mrs. Jones had kind words for no lay newspaper, even the Franco-loving *Tribune* and the Washington *Times-Herald*, the newspaper which on May 5 ran a full-page advertisement by the Embassy itself, breaking all diplomatic precedents. Since the Embassy ran it in only one paper, naturally it chose the *Times-Herald*.

"The Catholic press," she said, "is the only press which has published the truth. You should read *The Tablet* to get the closest thing to the truth, though." And she gave me the Brooklyn address of Father Curran's notorius pro-Coughlin paper, and a reprint of an article from *The Tablet*. She also gave me a less expensively produced leaflet put out by SEG, listing so-called "lies" and "truths" about Spain, which begins: "Believing that present day Spain is misunderstood, and that her culture, which is centuries old, is needed in the world today. . . ."

AT THE Washington headquarters for SEG, located in St. Benedict's bookshop, at 4620 Wisconsin Avenue in an outlying residential neighborhood, a pile of Embassy literature was displayed. Here I was given a membership card to fill out and send, along with donations, to the Baltimore office.

"I suppose you need help financially," I said.

"Yes," said Miss Elizabeth Nash, a tall woman with a refined accent, "because mimeographing and printing and mailing do cost money. And those two women in Baltimore are working women. They wouldn't dream of taking any money from the Embassy, because it would seem like a subsidy—and of course," she added, "the Embassy wouldn't offer it."

One of the more lurid publications she showed me, which I obtained later from the Embassy, was a reply to the State Department's "White Paper" on Spain. It was reprinted from *The Monitor*, official organ of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, and dated March 9, 1946. The treatise declares, not very grammatically:

"Well, can I help it if they won the strike?"

"The 'White Paper' condemns Franco for friendship with Hitler and Mussolini but as usual fails to indicate *why* Franco might have thought it expedient to do so. Franco was not neutral. That cannot be denied. But the enemy has been mistaken. *Franco was not neutral towards RUSSIA.*"

Mrs. Jones, in Baltimore, had claimed that theirs was the only organization of its kind. Although she said that "the Catholics are the only ones who are interested," she denied SEG was an arm of the Church. This did not mean that their response from appeals sent to Catholic girls' schools over the country was not gratifying. In several cases SEG had provided lecturers, she said.

The State Department's Public Views and Inquiry Section reports that most of the pro-Franco mail received by the State Department and the White House, which ran to about 1,000 communications a day during the UN subcommittee sessions, was "inspired by organized groups." The groups are for the most part Church-inspired, one official of the Department told me. Another, in the PVI section, said that much of this pro-Franco mail is composed of form letters, many of them mimeographed, and many consisting of write-ins on advertisements or publications which included blanks to be filled out. The advertisements urging such pro-Franco mail, inserted in various newspapers by the Knights of Columbus, resulted, I was informed, in quite a response.

A recent report of the Committee on Un-American Activities "on the Sources of Financial Aid for Subversive and Un-American Propaganda" gives prominent mention to one advertisement inserted by *The Protestant*—an open letter to the Missouri Knights of Columbus, which urges that the reader write to the President demanding a break with Franco. But the committee report makes no mention of the fact that *The Protestant's* ad was in answer to one by the Knights of Columbus. The reasoning of the committee is clear: one ad defending the only remaining fascist government in Europe is not Un-American as the Wood-Rankin committee sees it; another ad which urges a break with Franco is un-American.

The committee was not brash enough, apparently, to attack the St. Louis Metropolitan Church Federation, which also ran an advertisement, in the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, urging Christians to write to President Truman supporting his "stand against Franco, the last Axis partner." This was before it became generally understood that the recent statement on Franco issued by Washington, London and Paris, was nothing more than a

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pious declaration serving to quiet the growing indignation of the peoples of Britain, France and this country against appeasement of Franco.

Actually there are many outstanding Catholics such as Philip Murray of the CIO, and doubtless many obscure ones, who have demanded a break with the Franco government. But the weight of the Church hierarchy, through various priests and organizations and publications, has been thrown on Franco's side.

From the State Department's information that the anti-Franco mail is generally not organized but apparently from persons who express themselves individually, it would seem that those Catholics who are pro-Franco went into action when the UN took up Spain, while progressives sat on their hands and figured no one actually was writing in in defense of Franco. The pro-Franco mail increased.

THE very next night after the tripartite statement was made (March 4) and reported in the press, Spanish Evidence Guild literature was distributed at a meeting in the swanky Mayflower Hotel here. It was a meeting sponsored by the Critics' Forum, which provides "Catholic Thought on the Best Sellers." The book on Spain by former Ambassador Hayes was reviewed by the Rev. James M. Gillis, editor of *The Catholic World*. Mr. Gillis liked it. He thought it so objective. Then came the question hour, and the pat question. A woman wanted to know how she could get some more of that interesting literature given out at the door. "We just hoped you'd ask that," cooed a woman chairing the meeting. So she told the audience: 107 E. 25th Street, Baltimore. No individual's name appeared on the literature, which consisted of two pieces. One was their standby, "Answers to Lies . . ." etc. The other was a lurid yellow throw-away which proclaimed in large red letters:

"Fellow Americans! DO YOU BELIEVE IN JUSTICE? Then WIRE—WRITE your President, Congress, State Dept. PROTEST! Your Government's action against the Peace-loving Spanish People. STOP! Infamous Plot to Give Russia Control of the Mediterranean. REMEMBER! Lenin's words — SPAIN will be the second Soviet; MEXICO third; THE U.S. FOURTH!" In one corner appeared the words in more modest type: Spanish Evidence Guild.

I asked Mrs. Jones where in Lenin's works you could find that quote. Now let's see, she said, rolling her eyes around coyly—she ought to be able to remember, but she couldn't.

I had first looked for Mrs. Jones at the 25th Street address, where I was told that she might be found in the studio at the rear of the sedate old brick home. The studio was locked, and it was, incidentally, barren of signs or even a name over the bell. When I found Mrs. Jones at her home, she obviously was not expecting visitors. Rising to the occasion, however, she gave me a sugary smile.

She began in a mild way. "We ourselves think that Franco is not a bad man." She looked at me inquiringly, then went on. "But whatever he is, at any rate the Spanish people should be allowed to have the government of their choice."

"Whatever else you may say about him," she said, warming to her subject, "Franco saved Spain for Spain. So I say, if it hadn't been for Franco—" She left the sentence unfinished, then with her deep-set, dark eyes glowing, turned to me and demanded, "Just how do *you* feel about Franco?" After I replied, her manner visibly cooled. I obtained little else from her, other than her reply to my question as to how she thought Secretary of State Byrnes was doing now. "Our policy does seem more conservative," she purred. "Of course, they were so criticized there for a while, the State Department people. And they are fighting among themselves. Some are Communistically inclined, others are not." She sighed.

B. Golden

WHEN I presented myself to Mrs. Jones' Baltimore partner, the august Miss Long, she demanded to know how I knew where to find her. "From the Spanish Embassy," I replied.

"Why," she said, being perhaps more cagey than the girls who answer telephones at the Embassy, "they don't know anything about me." As for me, she would tell me nothing until she had me "investigated."

"I assumed you would have nothing to hide and would be glad to have people write about the Spanish Evidence Guild," I said. "Is your membership a mass affair, or just limited to a few?"

"Really, you are most persistent," she said. "We have members throughout the country. But we have only those who bear investigation."

"Investigation by whom?" I asked.

"Those who bear investigation," she repeated firmly. "Just as I said. As for you, I can tell you now that I don't think we will let you write anything about the Spanish Evidence Guild."

In Washington, Miss Nash warned me that all questions must be answered by the Baltimore office. She herself was just a "contact." But prior to this she had talked to me freely. When I first entered her shop, which features religious objects of art and books, she inquired pleasantly, "What parish are you from?" I said I was not from a parish—I was interested in the Spanish Evidence Guild. She showed me the pile of SEG literature in the front of the shop.

She told me to be sure to listen to the American Forum of the Air that night, when the Rev. Joseph F. Thorning of St. Mary's Seminary, near Baltimore, was to take part in a debate. In both of the two outstanding radio forums on Spain recently, Franco's side has been defended by spokesmen for the Catholic Church, spokesmen of the most reactionary stripe. Liberal Catholic opinion apparently is seldom represented on these programs.

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THREE POEMS BY ILYA EHRENBURG

(One day before he left the United States, Ilya Ehrenburg met with some friends, and over the luncheon table recited these short lyrics recently published in the Soviet Union. A rough oral translation was jotted down on the back of a menu, and although there was no opportunity to check with the originals, we believe that as these poems stand they will be welcomed by our readers.—The Editors.)

Grunbaum.

TWO POEMS FOR VICTORY DAY

I

She wore a faded military blouse.
Her feet were bloody from walking.
She came and knocked at the door;
a mother opened.
The table was set for dinner.
The woman said,
"Your son was in the same regiment as I,
And I am here. . . .
They call me Victory."

The black bread was whiter than the day,
And the tears were saltier than salt,
And all the hundred capitols shouted in the distance,
Applauded and danced.

But in a small Russian village
Two women remained silent.

II

Of them the poet spoke long ago:*

They waited for each other a long time,
And when at last they met they did not
recognize each other.
It was in heaven, where there is no more pain,
But this was not in heaven. . . .
It was on this earth where you cannot take a step
But there is pain, pain, pain.

I waited for her as one can wait when one loves.
I knew her as one can only know oneself.
I called to her in dirt, in blood, in sorrow.
And the day arrived, the war was ended.
I returned home.
She came toward me.
We did not recognize each other.

* In reference to a poem by Lermontov.

AFTER SEEING THE MASS GRAVES

There was a time I lived in cities
And the living were my dear ones.

And now on empty fields
I must uncover graves.
Now each ditch is known to me
And each grave is my home.

Of this beloved woman
Once I used to kiss the hands
And although I was among the living
I did not know this woman.

My child, my red lips,
My countless family,
I hear you calling from every grave.
I speak for the dead.

We go where still living cities
Breathe out odors of bread and perfume.
Lower your flags.
Turn out the lights.
It is not we who have arrived,
No, not we, but the graves.

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II: THE CULT OF "PURE POETRY"

Unlike a Victor Hugo or a Rimbaud who dipped into the future and prophesied, Valery, despite outward appearances, turned toward the past.

By JEAN LARNAC

This is the final half of the article on the French poet Paul Valery who said, "What is form for others is content for me." The author continues his detailed analysis of the premises which underlie modern "pure poetry," whose practitioners wish to dissociate themselves not merely from society, but from their own human character, in the interests of art.

VALERY never admits the anecdotal, like those versifiers who relate, narrate or discuss: they are novelists or philosophers in verse, impure poets who exploit the magic of poetry to draw a tear from the reader, elicit his approval, incite him to combat, love or conquests. True poetry can only be mathematics with innumerable though unformulated theorems, a distillation of essences, the nourishment of pure minds, an end in itself. Of course, there are times when a poem, fruit of so many equations, elixir filtered through so many refinements, arouses in some specially-prepared reader a pleasure akin to that of the poet and thus serves as a linguistic link between them.

"We transform ourselves, putting ourselves in the place of him whose sensitivity is capable of such fullness of delight and immediate understanding," Valery confesses, thinking no doubt of what Mallarme's work meant to him. But that is the limit of communication between the poet and the person reading him. Seek not in his work either the impact of his sensitivity or a message of his mind. Pure poetry charms; it neither arouses nor teaches. Following the example of Baudelaire, Valery likes to use certain powerful words like "death" and "tomb." But while these words, from the pen of Baudelaire, vibrate and provoke anguish, from the fountain-pen of the author of *Charmes* they become over-refined, elegant, harmonious. They no longer evoke the macabre: the learned juggler has conjured them up with perfect grace, without soiling his fingers.

"Art," says Schelling, "owes its birth only to those lively vibrations of the deepest powers of the soul which we call enthusiasm." But to Valery this is a scandalous conception. Enthusiasm, he declares, "is not a writer's state of soul." He rejects inspiration. Neither love, nor drugs nor the ideologist's enthusiasm arouses him. He wants the mind cold, for emotion troubles the algebrist or chess-player. "Pythia [the Delphian Oracle] could not dictate poems," he asserts in *Rhumbs*. And in *Litterature* he notes: "The idea of inspiration contains the following: that which costs nothing has the most value. . . . What has the most value should not cost anything. And this: to glory most in that for which one is least responsible." It is like reading Julien Benda, another emasculator of human values.

To admit inspiration would be to reduce the poet (etymologically: creator or discoverer) to the role of an observer or of a copyist in bondage to the Muse. And no doubt it sometimes happens that a verse is "inspired," springing forth fully armed from nothingness. But every true poet dismisses this natural product as a commonplace of no value. Only verses fabricated with knowledge and care may hope to enter into a work of pure art.

THE surrealists rejected this theory. They gave a privileged place to dreams, to the work of the unconscious. Followers of Freud, they sought self behind all the masks furnished by reason. They went beyond the self of Valery, which is like a desperately empty corridor, and opened the trap-door leading to the abysses of the unconscious; and fishing blindly, at random, they have come up with strange monsters of the deep. Although sympathetic with the doctrines of the Viennese psychoanalyst (as with all discoveries of science), Valery could not accept this revolt of primitive forces. He rose up against the idea that the dimming of reason could inspire inner poetry and that it was enough to digress to become a poet. "The true condition of a true poet," he wrote forcefully, "is what is most distinct in the dreaming state." Poetry, a patient amalgam of marvels, can only arise in the most lucid conscience:

Patience! Patience!
Patience dans l'azur,
Tout atome de silence
Est la chance d'un fruit mur.

(Patience! Patience!
Patience in the azure,
Every atom in the silence
Has a chance to become ripe fruit.)

As against the automatic writing of Andre Breton, who claims to have received his poem "The Sunflower" in his sleep, Valery proposes the slow work of the architect. But do not these two attitudes—that of the ultra-lucid mind seeking the secrets of self in the blinding light of consciousness, and that of the digresser looking for them in the most obscure recesses of the unconscious—end in the creation of quite similar works? The surrealists draw on nightmares for inspiration of their absurd writings; Valery achieves a similar result by dint of subtle combinations. Louis Aragon, who made his literary debut together with Breton, warned of the danger besetting those of his friends who were incapable of tearing themselves away from the delights of loss of consciousness: "They plunged into a kind of sea of deception; and like a sea of deception, surrealism threatens to sweep them toward the open ocean where the sharks of madness roam" (*Une Vague de Reves*).

But who will warn against the dangers of Valery's game? If the surrealists sought in madness lessons of wisdom, super-truths recalling Arthur Rimbaud's illuminations, Valery sought in wisdom the voluptuousness of madness. Despite doctrinal differences, how he resembles those to whom he denies all talent! Does he not assert that the encounter of words, images,

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sounds and rhythms are often, like haphazard ideas, the result of chance? But there is only one difference: he observes these fortuitous combinations with his whole intellect on the alert and chooses from among this tangle as he pleases; while the surrealists cultivate drowsiness, hoping thus to achieve their aim. They harvest a fruit yet refuse to watch its birth, growth and ripening—while Valery observes all these with jealous attention. Two techniques: one of lucidity, one of torpor. The result is the same —inaccessibility to the "vulgar" masses.

Even so, surrealism bears within itself rich ferments, while Valery takes pains to eliminate any power of suggestion from his poetry. To Breton and his friends, a poem is an act capable of affecting the destiny of men. To Valery it is nothing but a precious *bibelot* destined for a small number of collectors. Paul Eluard has shown in numerous poems how, in the surrealists' view, a new nature and a new world can arise from the inventions of art. The messianic belief of the surrealists carries the reader outside the poem and flings him toward his fate. The work of Valery, on the other hand, encloses him within an illusory play of facets.

"I WANT to be *different*," the seventeenth century *precieuses* used to say. Did not this irresistible craving to be different motivate, at least in part, Valery's love of the esoteric? No doubt a work of art would not be a creative act *par excellence* if it reproduced known forms, if it did not present an achitecture of originality. But how akin this need of finding something new is to horror of the banal and commonplace! The search for words, resonances, rhythms and grammatical constructions which aims at expressing what has never yet been expressed, and reserving it for an elite of the happy few, appears as futile as the search for a boot or a dress "which is not everybody's."

To be sure, Balzac, Stendhal, Baudelaire, Flaubert, Rimbaud, Nietzsche and many others have justified this need to startle the Philistines by ridiculing them; and it may well be that, like them, Valery too felt this need. But what does this attitude reflect? Too subtly-minded to accept bourgeois values, diverted by pride from values of the common people which had not yet sufficiently matured, many young men of the nineteenth century bourgeoisie, having assailed the prosaic philistinism of their class, its narrowness of views and its sordid attachment to class interests, took refuge in snobbism, in an arrogant disdain for man, at times even in madness, instead of putting their criticism to the test of action. Yet in their day Ronsard, Voltaire and Victor Hugo did not hesitate to enter into the social struggle.

When the struggle sharpened and demanded a cruel choice, most modern poets deemed it best to turn aside. Everything human became alien to them: religious torments, aspirations for a better world, even love. Let the common people try pig-headedly to remake the world—these poets, viewing the pursuit of the just and true as futile, have in mind only the beautiful so difficult to achieve, the work of art which no one before them has created, which no amateur can boast of owning. "It is a common defect of mortals that they consider difficult things the most beautiful things," said Descartes. Yet to the farmer the finest wheat is not that which gives the most trouble to his farmhands and harvesters. The quest of the difficult for the sake of the difficult attracts only the person who has leisure time on his hands. And almost always it is accompanied by snobbism. Did the Dadaist movement have any other aim? Flaubert himself, the serious-minded Flaubert, hoped to shock the bourgeoisie with his *Salammbo*. So Valery was too much obsessed with the desire to write a poem in which nothing was banal and everything new; and one cannot help comparing him with those elegant seventeenth century ladies who tossed away a hat or handbag the day they saw one of their rivals wear something similar. One is reminded of Iphis, remaining barefoot in her room after she saw a slipper more original than her own.

We would certainly not make such

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comparisons if in Valery this quest of the unique were akin to the passionate quest of a Pascal seeking God, of a Descartes hunting for truth, of a Rimbaud thirsting for the Absolute. But Valery's Narcissus, his Pythia, and *Jeune Parque* agree with Mallarme, who said that the greatest beauty is the most sterile beauty. Is it not strange that one who considers a work of art the creative act *par excellence* should want it to be sterile? In his view, a work of art becomes soiled the moment it insists on arousing some emotion, awakening some desire. It becomes involved in the absurdity of life; it is no longer worthy of belonging to the immaculate realm of the pure facts of consciousness. To conceal all possible meaning, particularly all connections with the heart and flesh —must that be the major preoccupation of the artist? That is why we find in Valery's poetry, instead of the pulsating warmth of a soul that communicates and invites communication, only a feverish fear of self-betrayal.

Before Mallarme, poetry was dictated by a state of soul. Since then, poetry manufactured by chance combinations dictates an artificial state of soul. By dint of critical refinement, the culture-weary poet has lost his virile faculties of conception and seeks to reawaken esthetic emotion by a masturbation of linguistic forms. No idea seems to him authentic enough, no verbal construction new enough, no rhythm startling enough. A stranger to life, intoxicated by the trifling demands of an art in decline, he weaves a useless tapestry, knowing that no one will really appreciate its beauty since he alone knows the innumerable stages through which he passed to arrive at his conception.

Pure poetry: impossible poetry, the chimerical end-point of inhuman research. Valery saw this in the twilight of his life: "The concept of pure poetry is that of an inaccessible type, of an ideal limit of the desires, efforts and powers of the poet." What a painful assertion! It leads us to consider this writer of talent an anti-humanist *par excellence*, a shipwrecker of thought and art. To him, intellectual or artistic creation is reduced to a vibration arising from the calm of the spirit and ending in the peace of the spirit—a ripple on the water, leaving nothing save the possibility for another spirit to find, by contact with the philosopher's or poet's words, a source of new vibrations, of perhaps an altogether different order. Some years ago Emannuel Berl wrote of "the death of bourgeois morality." May we not say that Valery announces the death of bourgeois thought? Better than any analysis crammed with footnotes, his example shows that art and thought disappear when one refuses to nourish them at the sources of life. Born of action, they should lead to action. And it is easy to see why, under the leadership of Aragon, Eluard, Pierre Emmanuel, Loys Masson and several other gifted writers, so many young poets, annoyed by the baubles of their elders, are today trying to regraft poetry on the full-blossoming tree of humanity.

It is not without a tugging of the heart that we turn away from Paul Valery. A Platonist in his cult of the pure Idea, classic in his style studded with so many archaic and Latin expressions, he was destined to find favor with all those who received a traditional university education. Better than anyone else, he absorbed that culture—and wrote the finest classroom exercises imaginable. We too admired him, as teachers and students used to admire those who excelled in writing themes. But how admire without reservations an art which at bottom is nothing but rhetoric—superior rhetoric, undoubtedly, often striking in its uniqueness—but which at times reminds us of the most mediocre poems of the eighteenth century Abbe Delille?

Ben-Zion.

Apart from this taste for abstractions which relates him to the Platonists, apart from this classic talent which places him in the tradition of Cicero, Racine, Bossuet and Descartes and has won for him the finest letters of nobility of which a writer may dream, Valery owes his success to a strange spiritual contradiction. Behind his rationalism, so dear to French minds, beneath his serenity of language, there is a hidden anguish which has gained for him the esteem of tender souls influenced by Pascal. "At the extremity of every thought there is a sigh," Valery wrote in *Rhumbs*. Others, in his place, would not have stopped there: they would have pushed their investigations further and expressed the pathos of human life. By indulging in his delicate repartees he displeased no one and permitted the most diverse minds to think that he was akin to them. Even his haughty pessimism enlarged the circle of his fervent admirers, for there are many intellectuals who do not conceive of wisdom without that tinge of bitterness in which they see the supreme distinction of the mind.

But in the light of recent events which have shaken the world and seem to unfold new destinies for man, it is easy to see that in his childhood Valery dreamed too much by the side of graves and graveyards. Instead of participating in the great adventure glorifying life and effort, he retired into his most secret recesses, sheltered from sorrows but also from the pulsating joys that exalt a person devoted to humanity. With his lucid but disheartening consciousness, he made us disgusted with inner analysis and gave us a taste for direct art, stripped of anything that is not vision, movement and action. From life he "raised himself" to thought; from thought to introspection; from introspection found futile to pure poetry, a gratuitous game *par excellence*. But such niceties of intellectual distinction made us fond of dynamism, drove us to life with blackened pus-ridden hands, to plunge

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into sands, seas, rivers and meadows, to seek heroism . . . in short, to live.

We do not reproach Valery for having written difficult works, for then we would have to level the same, and even sharper, criticisms of Einstein. What we hold against him is the fact that he cultivated esotericism for the sole pleasure of toying with difficulty, that he left us without truths, in a word; that despite his smile of irony he wrote sad books in which thought becomes charming in order not to die. Doubts and perplexities: that is his philosophy. Games without meaning: that is his poetry. He has no message to hand down to us. A magnificent orchid without perfume, an astonishing success at intellectualism, he leaves his friends only a precious memory. In his *L'Ame et la Danse*, Atikte dances for her pleasure; but none of her movements, however graceful, succeeds in banishing the boredom she feels emanating from her loneliness. With her creator, she knows the terrible melancholy of those who have not *tried* to live. "Flesh is sad, alas! and I have read all the books," wrote the poet Mallarme. If Valery had not had a profound contempt for the flesh, he could have signed this bleak verse of his master.

Unlike a Victor Hugo or a Rimbaud who dipped into the future and prophesied, Valery, despite outward appearances, lived turned toward the past, like a Henri de Regnier or an Albert Samain. No doubt it would be going too far to compare him with the neo-classicists who, in the period that witnessed the rise of nineteenth century romanticism, took refuge in their memories of the period before the French Revolution. Yet Valery did lack enthusiasm, fervor, hope, faith in life, an *elan* toward singing tomorrows. His emaciated face is not that of a guide pointing out our road to the future, inspiring us with the boldness necessary to build a world to our own measure; it is rather that of a monk wrapped up in himself, while the cyclotron, test-tube, tractor and printed word shake the whole earth. And that he should die at the very moment in which atomic energy ushers in the far-reaching revolutions of tomorrow seems proof that with him a page of the great book of our destiny has ended. Narcissus alone knew himself, amused himself with his own jugglings. Let him remain alone in his grave—the people will not visit it to weep for him.

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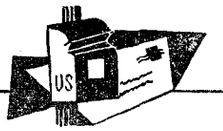

"Cancer, schmancer . . ."

To New Masses: Arnaud D'Usseau's article on the theater reminds me of the old joke: "Cancer, schmancer, so long as you're healthy!" He refuses to share the pessimism of others about the future of the theater in America, but he offers us nothing on the basis of which we can share his optimism. It is also an unfair assumption on his part that those who see no brightness on the horizon of the commercial theater have given up the struggle for a decent theater altogether.

I think that the success of his own play has blinded Mr. D'Usseau to the most elementary facts about the commercial theater: the chronic unemployment of the major part of its actors, with all that implies in the way of human waste and technical decline; the real estate monopoly which makes three or four men the arbiters of the fate of any Broadway play; the price of seats which vitiates the idea of progressive audience participation, except in unsual circumstances; the censorship of pressure exercised by the producer and backer over the writer to make him angle his play on the harmless side; the absence of repertory companies, so that one has to come from England to prove that they can be successful: in other words, not to go on and on, the utter lack of security which capitalism bequeaths to every man and woman who values the development of the human spirit.

It is not enough for us to pay lip service to our hatred of capitalism; we have to study its effects in each field with which we deal. Mr. D'Usseau has not done this for the theater. For example, he states that the theater is still relatively free from the curse of monopoly. The "still" and the "relatively" are more revealing than the "free." But even if it were true that the theater is free, is this not like the freedom of a candy-store keeper, or any small businessman, perpetually on the verge of bankruptcy? Mr. D'Usseau says that a producer can still get $30,000 to put on a play that strikes out, and then he tells us that *Home of the Brave* lost $60,000 trying to keep open. Now if the majority of managers on Broadway are out chiefly to make a dollar, what lesson are they supposed to draw from this? That they should have the honor of losing money to keep a play on the boards merely because it is a good one? How long would *On Whitman Avenue* have lasted had not every available progressive organizational resource been thrown behind it? More than three days? Is this cause for cheerfulness?

"The critics aren't all that we would like" is stating it *very* mildly. But supposing they were; this would still mean that any play about which they had honest and competent reservations, but which they did not wish to kill, would stand the chance of a snowball in hell of surviving more than a week. Because people will pay Federal Theater prices for a play the critics dislike, but they won't pay Broadway prices for a play of whose second act the critic has a slighting word or two. That is economics, not pessimism.

Most of Mr. D'Usseau's article is concerned with the production of new plays. But what of the classics? In Isidor Schneider's article in the same issue, it was stated that sixty percent of Soviet productions are of classics. The shameful paucity of the American commercial theater in this field is beyond argument. Yes, we must fight for a decent theater wherever any theater exists, as well as where it does not. But it is wrong to minimize the degree to which the theater shares in the contradictions of capitalism, or to avoid describing in detail its destructive influence.

L. R.

New York.

Thinking Straight

To New Masses: You are rightly proud of the improved NM. As for myself, I am more pleased than I can tell you to see you taking up some of the real Marxist classics. The emotional approach is as necessary and as right as rain; but we must remember the lesson we have so recently learned—the terribly expensive lesson—that the vanguard of the workers must keep its thinking straight.

Value, Price and Profit and *Wage, Labor and Capital* can stand much detailed and illustrative exposition. Then, I suggest sketches of primitive accumulation. Why "free enterprise" inevitably leads to monopoly, the role of science in accelerating this trend, and in increasing man-hour productivity.

Then a careful series of treatments of the effects of monopoly on the theses of *Value, Price and Profit* and *Wage, Labor and Capital.*

Another job that needs desperately to be done is to make crystal clear the meaning of the dialectical materialist conception of history.

C. B. D.

Province, B.C.

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review and comment

COPPERHEAD LOGIC

"The compromisers of all periods speak the same language." New York's "peace-Democrats."

By HENRIETTA BUCKMASTER

THE UNTERRIFIED, *by Constance Robertson. Holt.* $3.

HISTORY has indeed, as Constance Robertson observes, "the restful faculty of holding still while you look at it," but it has in addition the dynamic faculty of casting light upon our modern selves.

The Unterrified, Mrs. Robertson's new novel, performs this office with remarkable and commendable zeal. "Unterrified" was a derisive adjective linked with "unwashed," and directed against the Democrats in the pre-Civil War period. The unwashed and the unterrified were the Copperheads and the peace-Democrats who fought with propaganda, politics, riot and terror against Lincoln and all those who were, willy-nilly, bringing about emancipation. They were powerful men in powerful places, but they were also the desperate, poor and hungry pawns of those in power, who saw in the war little but deeper hunger for themselves and competition from freed Negroes.

Mrs. Robertson had cast the frame of the novel wisely. In the family of Senator King of Troy, New York, are the natural ingredients for this large drama. The world of upstate New York was dominated by the new governor, Horatio Seymour, a peace-Democrat if ever there was one. Senator King, handsome, and elderly with honors, held even more influence than the governor. Ran, his son, was an honorable branch of this same tree, and bound to rise high with the governor. The Senator had, in addition, given Hudson Valley society a pleasant fillip by recently marrying a Kentucky girl, Lacey, as young as his son and beautiful enough to turn any man's head. The Kings were eager to make clear that she was not a Rebel sympathizer; her first husband had been killed in the Union army. She was only—against the war.

The respectability and logic of these peace-Democrats is built skillfully—the logic which led them straight into the Knights of the Golden Circle and the darkest of Copperhead machinations. The simple fervor and uncomplicated abolition reasonings of Dex Bard, Ran's cousin and a Union officer, seem naive and falsely-heroic to the more devious minds of the Kings.

The lifelong intimacy of Ran and Dex is broken not only because of their deep political difference, but because they are both being caught in the languid, cool, irresistible coils of Lacey. She is lovely and logical and understanding and pathetically romantic, for no man, even sixteen-year-old Nate, Ran's brother, could help but wonder how happy she was with a man older than her father. Dex returns to his regiment, glad to be out of the slow sucking world of Lacey and Ran; but Ran cannot run away. He adores his father, he resists every blandishment of Lacey except one. He accepts John Andrews at face value, both because he is Lacey's old friend and because he has the ear of the governor.

As Senator King draws farther and farther away from the Peace-Nowers, his eyes opening to something sinister which his conservatism had at first concealed from him, Ran becomes more deeply involved. He is taken into the inner circle of the Golden Knights by John Andrews and is being committed irrevocably to a world which loiters always on the fringe of street riots. At the same time his influence in state political groups is increasing. Finally, however, Lacey causes him to make love to her, and horrified by disloyalty to his father, he cuts all his connections in Troy and goes to New York to work with Andrews for "peace."

The climax comes with the draft riots, those unbelievable three days in 1863 when over a thousand people were killed, Negroes being lynched in the streets, Union soldiers being tortured to death. Ran, by a grimmer and even more irrefutable logic, learns the terrible error of his ways, the roles Lacey and Nate have played, and makes restitution in the only way open—by joining the Union army.

By all odds, the last third of the book, dealing with the riots, is the best. There Mrs. Robertson writes with great sweep, power and chilling excitement, making something highly creative out of a recreation. Her knowledge of history, of vernacular, of modes, manners and 1863 tempo is unexcelled. She is obviously a deep and enthusiastic scholar who knows the who and the why and the where of those days as plainly as the palm of her hand. Too much so, sometimes—for she fails to fuse spirit and things; she is so eager to get the right kind of material for a lady's gown that the lady herself is apt to suffer. But this is a minor thing in comparison with the dynamics she has released. The compromisers of all periods speak the same language, and we should familiarize ourselves closely with their credence and logic.

Sex & Horsewhips

A HOUSE IN THE UPLANDS, *by Erskine Caldwell. Duell, Sloane & Pearce.* $2.50.

HAD "A HOUSE IN THE UPLANDS" been written by an unknown, no one would have needed to review it; one questions whether anyone could have been brought to publish it. The only thing worth discussing about it is how a writer of Caldwell's distinction and power came to produce such a book. For there is no deceiving oneself; with the best will in the world, one must admit that this novel is remarkably bad. It is not, moreover, bad in an unintentional or accidental way, with a badness that any gifted novelist might fall into in one of his off mo-

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ments. Rather, it is bad according to a special formula.

We have in this novel one Lucyanne Dunbar. "She was dark-haired and slender with firmly rounded arms and legs and her skin was slightly tanned summer and winter. Her full generous mouth was quick to smile. . . ." She appears on the dust jacket exhibiting quite a lot of that tanned skin. Her husband, however, does not appreciate her. He is a sort of juvenile Simon Legree, seldom seen without a horsewhip and never seen sober except when he is dying. He ignores his bride in favor of one of the girls on the plantation. Thus we are enabled to have, in swift succession, a scene of Lucyanne trying to get into her husband's bed; a discovery scene in which she finds him with the other girl; a love scene in a cornfield at midnight with the adoring son of the tenant farmer; a lovely big horsewhip scene when the husband drags Lucyanne home by her hair; a tragic deathbed scene in which friend husband assures Lucyanne that he really loved her all along; and the final exit of our heroine on the arm of her husband's cousin, who loved her all along too. All this, if you can imagine it, written in a style which is just this side of the Hays Office.

In the background are Negroes being exploited, Southern smalltown politicians being consciously cynical and corrupt, and Lucyanne's mother-in-law being a mother-in-law out of the funny papers. There is also a subplot involving the husband's gambling debts and the vain efforts of his cousin to raise money for him—for, though bitter political and amorous enemies, these Southern cousins stick together. These events occupy some 50,000 words. We are told by the publisher's blurb that the novel moves fast.

E. Jaedtker.

It does indeed. It moves so fast that there is no time for characterization, no time for atmosphere or description, no time even for giving anybody a credible motive for his actions; time only for the torn clothes and the horsewhips.

Flashes of genuine Caldwell do break in, here and there. The dialogue of the Negroes is well handled, in contrast to the Take-your-hands-off-that-woman-suh style of the whites. The plea of the old Negro who has worked all his life for no pay and begs in vain to be allowed to leave the plantation is worthy of a better book—the only genuinely moving thing in this one. There is a poker-playing scene with the town's politicians which reads like the outline of a brilliant scene. But even the best things, even the genuine indignation at the exploitation of the Negro, are hurried over perfunctorily.

There is enough, moreover, to suggest the fatal weaknesses which led Caldwell into this travesty of himself. He began by indicting the South for its corruption, its injustice, its perversion of natural human health and love into a seething hatred in which members of the same family inevitably became each other's worst enemies instead of best friends. Yet always there was a suggestion that he found the abnormal lively and exciting, the normal dull. *Tobacco Road* exposed the grotesque degradation and wretchedness forced upon the tenant farmer; but it took a certain joy in the very grotesquerie of its characters. *Georgia Boy* exposed the cruelties practiced upon Negroes, in the name of humor, by Southern degenerates; but there were plenty of signs that Caldwell really thought the cruel practical jokes were funny. And the most drunken, perverted, brutalized characters were always romanticized in a curious way; the suggestion was that such creatures as Journeyman lived more intensely or more joyously than healthy or honest people.

And so, from taking an incidental pleasure in the cruelty he was exposing, he has come to value the cruelty for its own sake. In *A House in the Uplands* the social criticism has shrunk almost to vanishing point. Caldwell no longer seems interested, even, in the pressures which turned his characters into improbable monsters. It is enough for him that they are monsters; he cannot get his mind off the horsewhip.

JOY DAVIDMAN

In the Soviet Navy

SOUL OF THE SEA, *by Leonid Sobolev. Lippincott.* $3.

SHOP talk! It sometimes seems to me that all the really good talk there is is shop talk of one kind or another—the talk of men and women who know their job, understand each other's pride in past achievement, share each other's concern with perfecting future accomplishment, and respect one another's understanding and skill.

That tone of sober, unpretentious, but fundamental interest is precisely the tone in which this baker's dozen of short stories is written. And, like all good shop talk, it holds the attention of any outsider within earshot. There is, in fact, a peculiar recreation in listening to talk so clearly not addressed to you, and yet impersonal and concrete enough for you or any serious man to follow. You begin to listen casually and gradually become more and more absorbed in the simple straightforward account of episodes incident to the transition from a Czarist to a socialist navy.

At first your eavesdropping seems to gather only factual information; then you become conscious of a number of unstressed but vivid pictures—for instance, that of gay young Yuri Shalavan, ex-officer by courtesy only, as "the Naval College had closed down quietly two years earlier, before he had time to graduate from it," who found "all he could do was to cling to old navy traditions for support. If he had to fall in the abyss, then let it be in the company of others;" but who, by virtue of native good will, energy and luck, blundered into an altogether plausible, and typical, integration with the new Soviet world.

Another memorable picture is that of Boris Ignatievitch, professor and intellectual, faced with the first "illiterate" sailor to enter the academy, or that of an earnest commissar conscientiously dealing with the problem of an invaluable Second Assistant—formerly "Chief Boatswain of the Czar's Navy"—who is corrupting all the young Komsomol sailors with his inspired profanity.

Only after running through the entire gallery do you become aware of

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NOW IS THE TIME
FOR ALL GOOD MEN
and women to see
"ON WHITMAN AVENUE"

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ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN.

Marxism and Religion

RELIGION IN RUSSIA, *by Robert Pierce Casey. Harper.* $2.

FATHER CASEY is a scholar from whom, I trust, more will be heard. A graduate of Harvard College and the Harvard Divinity School, he postponed entering the ministry, sought a Ph.D. in England at Cambridge, and became Professor of the History and Philosophy of Religion at the University of Cincinnati and then at Brown University and, while still retaining his academic post, was ordained to the ministry of the Episcopal Church. An unusual linguist and a theologian, he has developed an interest in the Orthodox Church, is today advising the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church on matters relating to Orthodoxy, and is in a unique position to mediate between the Anglican and Orthodox worlds. That is why this book is important not only for its contents but for the potentialities of its author.

It is a joy to find this conservative churchman (I speak theologically) thoroughly alive to the Soviet Union, conscious of its growing strength, alert to its dynamics, conversant with its major language, familiar with its literature, and enjoying the enthusiasms of its varied peoples. He knows the ecclesiastical attitudes toward it and is courageous enough to call a spade a spade. All in all, this important book marks an extraordinary advance over the two serious works on this subject previously available in the United States: Timasheff's biased *Religion in the Soviet Union*, which simply catalogued anti-religious acts lifted out of all social context, and Paul Anderson's *People, Church and State in Modern Russia*, which was chiefly notable for its sympathetic presentation of Russian Orthodoxy to the Western mind.

Candor is particularly commendable in a church historian and the opening chapter is the most incisive statement I have yet seen as to why the Russian Revolution had to attack the Church, which " in its official policy epitomized and symbolized all that the liberals and radicals most disliked in the imperial system. It was autocratic and repressive and served as the state's chief support in maintaining the most backward social system west of the Turkish Empire." Dr. Casey presents many little-known facts about the growth of religious dissent in Czarist Russia and the almost universal disgust in intelligent religious, as well as secular, circles with the social structure.

Detailing the Marxist attitude towards religion, the author is meticulously careful in his quotations. Although he insufficiently relates the specific anti-religious campaigns to their historic social and economic context, he never loses sight of the ethical dynamic that lay behind them. "In spite of its coarseness and unsavoriness, this kind of anti-religious propaganda contained moral conviction. Plain facts of injustice and inefficiency had spoken plainly to men's minds and consciousness and they struck brutally, fanatically, and without due consideration at the institutions which tolerated and ecouraged these social evils."

He is particularly fascinated by the folklore of the Revolution and quotes at length from the epics and other poems of the more primitive peoples advanced by the Communist innovations. "Soviet education has reached an incredible high in an amazingly short time," he concludes, summing up his estimate of the "conversion of one-sixth of the world's surface to a new way of life, a way which leads from buffaloes to tractors and threshing machines, from ignorance to literacy, and from the political frustrations and oppression of working men to their responsible participation in the affairs of government." Although he ignores the religious institutions of these minority peoples—he might have dealt with the Evangelicals, the Jews, the Mohammedans, the Georgians and Armenian-Gregorians, to name only a few—he is constantly aware of the

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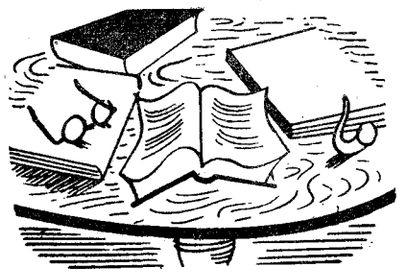

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human benefits that the Revolution has sought and to such an extent achieved. The religious struggle, as he describes it, is never divorced from the social context.

It is good in this day when some churchmen are minimizing fascism to find this writer quoting grim passages from captured Nazi documents and from Soviet literature portraying the true horror of the German attack and occupation. He commends the religious leaders of the Soviet Union for their instant support of the war effort and sees in it a true revival of the ancient spirit of Orthodoxy that the Church should be the servant of the Russian people. He correctly sees in this wartime identification of a common interest the key to the recent dramatic resolution of church-state tensions. (Incidentally, the other day I had the privilege of taking Ilya Ehrenburg to Princeton to meet Professor Albert Einstein, and on the way Mr. Ehrenburg unrestrainedly commended the role of the churches in the current tragic work of orphan adoption.)

It would have been helpful if this book could have included some material on the Uniat churches, in view of recent developments, but inasmuch as it was written in 1945 the author is content to describe Vatican-Kremlin relationships in general terms, pointing out that the Vatican's strategy "in Russia since the Revolution has been singularly maladroit. Open war . . . was declared precipitately and has hopelessly compromised rapprochement. . . ." Individuals interested in the relations between the Russian Orthodox Church in the United States and the Moscow Patriarchate will also find rewarding reading.

As a historian Dr. Casey hesitates to evaluate the events since 1943 in the religious field; he simply catalogues them with brief comment. Here he indulges in the one absolutely unpardonable statement in the entire set of lectures—a gratuitous remark in complete defiance of the cautious objectivity of his previous judgments. He speaks of the establishment of a State Council on Affairs of the Orthodox Church as "a government agency designed to gauge and control the expansion of the Church in accordance with the wishes of the state." How is one to explain, then, the fact that the churches sought and welcomed the establishment of this bureau, and a

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I. WALLMAN, Mgr.

similar one for the non-Orthodox Churches? He completely ignores the obvious explanation that these bureaus provided much-needed machinery for meeting the material needs of religious institutions which must exist in a socialist economy where property is state-owned and both production and distribution are regulated by over-all planning. And he overlooks the principle so often stated of the complete separation of church and state. On this important point he must do some further research.

This book makes no pretense at being a definitive work. It consists simply of six lectures of limited length delivered before the Lowell Institute, where selectivity was obviously required. The material presented is fascinating, colorful, illuminating. Dr. Casey has the linguistic skill, the analytical method and the literary ability to expand this lecture series into a major work. One suspects that with time he will.

WILLIAM H. MELISH.

Defending Humanities

THE HUMANITIES AND THE COMMON MAN: THE DEMOCRATIC ROLE OF THE STATE UNIVERSITIES, *by Norman Foerster, University of North Carolina Press.* $1.50.

THIS sixty-page essay, studded with quotations from Matthew Arnold, Emerson, Thomas Mann and various contemporary deans and professors, is another lament for the imperiled humanities, another call to their defense. The author views with alarm the defections and encroachments upon liberal arts territory, as many have done before him. He is aware that liberal education today must reckon with the broad needs of a democratic culture. He has therefore tried to review the traditional problems of the jeopardized liberal arts (specifically, at state institutions) in relation to popular demands that higher education be made available to all ranks of qualified students, as is fitting in a democracy.

His point of departure is the traditional humanist esteem for "the human self." One need not subscribe to Foerster's idealist philosophy in order to share his solicitude about our heritage. He finds a renewed concern for it, however, in a very limited quarter only: namely among intellectuals. Other allies are not mentioned. The enemies of humanism are envisaged under such abstract terms as naturalism, materialism (not defined) and spe-

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cialization. Actually, of course, the danger is to be found in the concentrated forces of monopoly capitalism which are attempting to wreck the labor movement at home and are maneuvering abroad for a new era of imperialist aggression. The only hope of a humanistic renaissance, as indeed of human survival, lies in the victory over this power. The fighters for that victory are the true allies sought by Foerster. If he looked beyond the campus limits he would find them in surprising and reassuring numbers.

Within the college Foerster deals with three aspects of higher education: curriculum, faculty and administration.

Concerning these three he makes criticisms both familiar and justified. He finds professors dull, pedantic, career-minded, over-specialized. He finds administrators preoccupied with problems of business and finance, disregarding educational values. Curiously enough, there is no section on the student body. The omission is perhaps indicative of the abstract thinking of humanistic spokesmen. Among the students, especially the veterans and the organizations struggling for equal, widened opportunities, the right to a job and the cause of world peace, Foerster would find his closest allies. His lamentations are premature, the humanities are better loved and more widely defended than he knows.

MARGARET SCHLAUCH.

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CLARA OSTROWSKY.

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Mr. Warren, recently discharged from the service, will be best remembered as the director of *Power*, Ben Hecht's *Fun To Be Free*, as a director for Labor Stage, and as an instructor for the League of American Writers and the New Theater League. The school is at 430 Avenue of the Americas and registration is in the evenings only.

THE noted Yiddish writer, Chahver-Pahver (Gershon Einbinder), whose fable, "The Warsaw Chanticleer," was published in English translation in the July 3, 1945 issue of NM, will shortly have a new book published called *Vovick*. It will be illustrated by Moses Soyer.

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"HENRY V" IN FILMS

"THE Chronicle History of King Henry the Fift with Battel fought at Agincourt in France" is the most successful movie venture into the Shakespeare country to date. Filmed in technicolor and with considerable emphasis on the pomp and circumstance of feudal England and France, it has the colors and the rhetoric of pageantry.

Starting with a shot of Elizabethan London, which takes us across the Thames to the theaters and bear-baiting pits of the other bank, the camera centers on the roofless circle of the Globe Theater. It picks up the orange sellers, the courtiers and gallants making their way up to their fashionable seats on the stage, the "rabble" in the pit, and all the gallimaufry associated with Shakespeare's theater.

The opening scenes of the play are presented "on stage" with the camera picking it up from the spectator's viewpoint, rather than moving around the set. Thereafter the camera, following Shakespeare's disregard for unity of place, takes us to the pre-D-Day assembly of British ships at Southampton and on to the British victory at Agincourt and Henry's courtship of Katherine.

Much could be said about the photographic elements in the film. It has a highly pictorial quality, particularly in the scenes around the Battle of Agincourt. Some of these, especially the massing of the French army and the charge of the French knights, can be compared to similar scenes by Eisenstein in *Alexander Nevsky*, though there is not in this English movie the insistence upon compositional values which in Eisenstein's later work becomes of almost as great importance as the actual dramatic content.

The character of Henry has been the subject of considerable debate by Shakespearean scholars, some of them maintaining that he is simply a strident, bombastic jingoist, others representing him as an impetuous and venturesome projection of the robust England of Shakespeare's period. In the Olivier production, undertaken during the war, with certain morale purposes in mind, the character of Henry leaves no doubt which construction is to be put upon it.

The comedy elements, as in a great deal of Shakespeare, have no organic relationship to the plot; but the audience, just as in Shakespeare's day, does not seem to mind at all, a tribute in a large degree to such actors as Robert Newton as Ancient Pistol, Roy Emerton as Bardolph, and Esmond Knight as Fluellen. Also included is probably the first stage Irishman on record—a caricature as phony as the movie version of a Negro servant.

The play, dealing as it does with a land war between two sets of imperial robber gangs, as represented by Henry V and the King of France, has an odd flavor for contemporary man. But there is one scene which has a modern ring. It occurs in the English camp the night before the battle when three English soldiers confusedly question the morality of war. Played in a low key, it is one of the most powerful moments in the film.

Laurence Olivier stars three times over—as producer, director, and in the role of Henry. In a superb cast, he nevertheless is outstanding, his stature and voice giving to the role of the English King the fire and vigor it demands.

If the American attempts at filming Shakespeare had the Bard turning over in his grave, he can rest now. *Henry V* is one of the finest things yet achieved on the screen.

THOMAS MCGRATH.

Records

THE Disc Company, in offering Soviet performances to the American record public, is embarking upon one of the most interesting of contemporary recording ventures. It is especially important because the two major record companies seem to have gone nationalistic, limiting their list to recordings that, good or bad, are "Made in America," and ignoring European recordings that in the past offered some of the most interesting musical experiences to record collectors. One wonders whether this is only a carry-over of war conditions, or a long-range isolationist program. A decently national program would be to encourage recordings both by young American artists and of the best works of contemporary American music; then to interchange such recordings with the best recorded examples of the musical culture of other lands.

The most important Disc album issued thus far is the Suite No. 2 from

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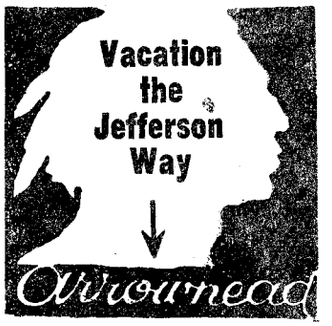

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Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, in a performance by the Moscow Philharmonic conducted by the composer. It was Prokofiev's daring project to write a ballet score that would occupy a full three hours, and to write music suited to ballet that would at the same time do full justice to the human content of Shakespeare's tragedy. What resulted, in 1935, was one of Prokofiev's ground-breaking pieces of music. In the opening "Montagues and Capulets" we can still recognize the old master of musical irony, unwinding poignant melodies over a sprightly dance rhythm. The two short dances, one boisterous and one tender, are likewise familiar and delightful Prokofiev. The "Parting of Romeo and Juliet," however, brings something new: a long slow movement built on songlike themes that are developed in a grand, contrapuntal design to make one of the most noble pieces of symphonic writing of our times. The closing section, "Romeo and Juliet's Grave," is likewise in the grand manner, compact in texture, deeply moving in melodic content, consummate in its harmonic and orchestral taste. On the debit side, it must be noted that two sections, "The Young Juliet" and "Friar Lawrence," sound incomplete. The recording is uneven, frequently sounding harsh, unbalanced and deficient in overtones. My guess is that this recording was originally made not for commercial use but for radio transcription. (Disc 754.)

Bach was of course the greatest example of a composer who throve on difficulties. In his Third Brandenberg Concerto he set himself the problem of writing in complicated polyphonic texture for strings alone, and emerged characteristically with the best music of the entire set of six concertos. It is music that makes us think of what physicists call a "chain reaction," developing new sources of energy as it moves along. The Fourth Concerto is lighter in vein, and with its improvisational passages for solo violin and two flutes it sounds like an eighteenth century jam-session. Koussevitzky's reading of these two works is a clear and sober one, with the real laurels going to the splendid tone of the Boston Orchestra and the equally fine recording. (Victor 1050.)

Licia Albanese and Robert Merrill sing the latter part of the Violetta-Germont duet from Verdi's *La Traviata*, in good voice but frigid style, not thawed by occasional sounds of weep-

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ing. (Victor 11-9175.) A much lighter order of singing is displayed by Marian Anderson in two Schumann songs, *"Der Nussbaum" and "Stille Tranen."* Here is not only a sumptuous and beautifully controlled voice, but phrasing that conveys a full weight of emotion with purely musical methods. (Victor 11-9173.)

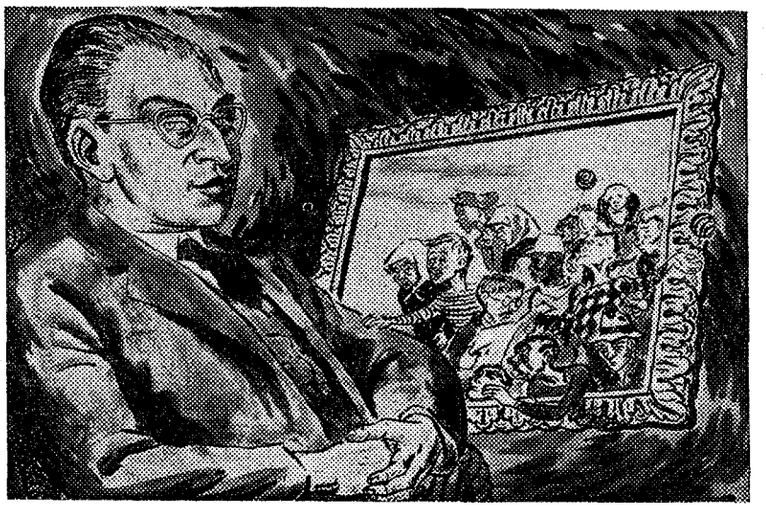
Decca's recording of *"El Amor Brujo,"* employing the Ballet Theater orchestra conducted by Dorati, lacks the sensuous qualities which a full symphony orchestra would give the De Falla score. But the addition of the original vocal passages, and of Argentinita's castanets and heel-tapping, emphasizes the popular and flamenco elements of the music and results in a most exciting reading. (Decca 390.)

The Brunswick King Oliver Album, in its historical jazz series, is for those who believe, as this writer does, that jazz is at its best when closest to the blues. Here are the blues, in all their beauty and variety of melody, performed in true folk style, seeking only to make the melodic line as expressive as possible. Joining Oliver in the album are such renowned New Orleans performers as Kid Ory, Omar Simeon, Albert Nicholas and Johnny Dodds. (*Brunswick* 1032.)

Harry Horlick's "Russian Hit Parade" is a project to further cultural relations between the two countries which lead the world in their wealth of popular music. Included in the album are four ingratiating examples of Soviet popular song, sung in English adaptations by Bob Hannon, plus a brilliant "Saber Dance" by Aram Khachaturian, and a piece in gypsy style called "By the Well." (Crown 5.)

The Hungarian pianist Georgy Sandor presents an album of one of the fathers of Hungarian music, Franz Lizst. It is not easy to listen to Lizst today. His innovations have become the cliches of the romantic movement, he kept his national feeling and his serious structures rigidly apart, and his construction leans too heavily on purely pianistic and dynamic effects. But such music as the Dante Sonata, Funerailles and the F Minor Etude are not yet ready for the morgue, for there is a vein of honest feeling and musical quality throughout them. Sandor discloses it with both an impeccable technique and musicianship. Also included are the Liebestraum and Rakoczy March (Columbia 602).

S. FINKELSTEIN.



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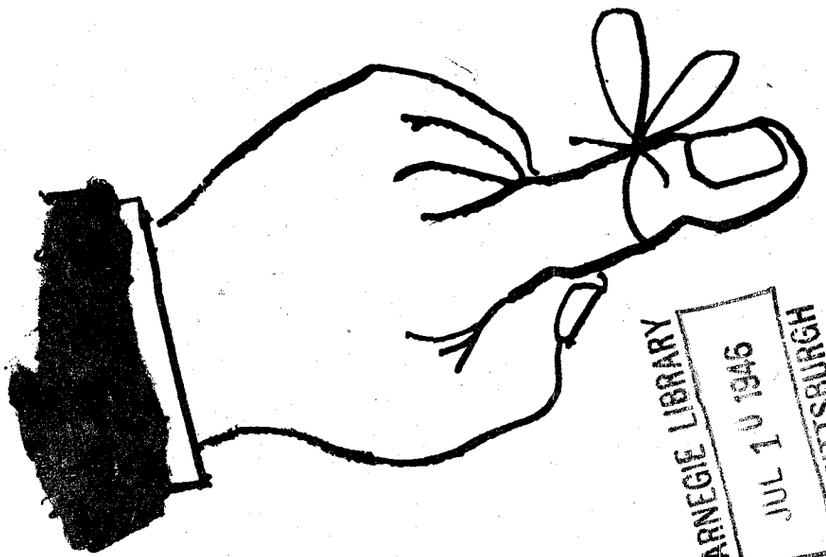

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